

**Murray Arts Advisory Board
Minutes for January 17, 2012**

Attendance: Mildred Horton, Elaine Judd, Jenny Simmons, Brandon Beckstead, Shauna Hart,
Elaine Judd, Scott Mooy, Sharon Whitney, Mary Ann Kirk (staff)
Excused: David Christensen

1. Minutes for November 15, 2011 were approved as written.
2. Mildred reminded the board that they were invited to the library celebration on February 25 at 7 pm. Scott Mooy thanked the cultural arts for the funding assistance to pay for the clinician for the Human Rights Day Concert. Mary Ann noted the city is also paying for the clinician for the community choir festival in February.
3. December events included the symphony (attendance 511). January events to date included Missoula Children's Theater (attendance 362) with \$1326 revenue which was slightly higher than last year. A total of 104 children auditioned with 58 cast. Jenny said she thought this performance was the best one she has ever seen. The queen was played by a high school student who was incredible.
4. Mary Ann reviewed upcoming events with the symphony, band, and youth musicals. Auditions for the first summer musical are set for March. Mary Ann followed the recommendations of the board to standardize the award amounts for each competition. Mary Ann wondered about combining the award reception for all competitions including the visual art, literary, and music. Mildred didn't think we could fit everyone at the library. Jenny thought it was nice to spread out the various programs. After discussion, the board suggested leaving the art reception the same but combining the literary and music awards into a nice program. Sharon suggested the literary winners could be asked to select a short excerpt. We could still collect a few of the 1st place art awards for a display. The library doesn't have a great piano. Jenny suggested the IMC reception area. The Heritage Center family night concert was another possibility. Mary Ann will explore these ideas.
5. The foundation feasibility study was presented to the city council prior to this meeting. Phyllis Hockett did a great job to summarize the study which included feedback from a number of individuals, foundations, and businesses. Her report indicated that 72% of the people were interested in donating, with the potential of raising \$3-\$4 million over the next two years. Lynn Chatterton expressed frustration about discussions regarding art facilities in a new junior high instead of the downtown area. He said the foundation board has voted to disband at the end of the month if the city does not provide written commitment to the downtown facility. Mary Ann tried to clarify some of the confusing construction figures that were discussed and said that she would rather have the junior high option than nothing at all. Mildred understood Lynn's frustration because the art facilities have been overlooked for many years and felt his point was well taken. She felt the city could have planned ahead and put a little money aside each year for the past ten years to move this project along. Board members felt that the new city councilmen were not familiar enough with the project and that the city council as a whole seems to have forgotten that we have developed an

operational plan. Mildred and Elaine were happy to sit down with their council members who are new.

Mary Ann reviewed some design options for recreation and art facilities for a new junior high facility. She and Cory Plant met with Mr. Tranter who is the project manager. They have come back with some added facility options and potential costs. The city would be responsible for the added costs beyond traditional junior high facilities. The school district will be presenting the information to the city council in February to explain the options. Mary Ann recommended a larger stage and dressing area, black box theater, and instrumental room similar to the high school. Additional storage would be needed. A fly system with pit is an option but Mary Ann was concerned about these options in a junior high setting. Shauna questioned why we would add these if they are already available at the high school. Mary Ann explained we don't need these added elements other than what the school itself needs if the performing arts center moves forward. Elaine asked if the school district wanted to do this. Mary Ann said they were willing to incorporate it as long as the extra costs were covered. Mildred suggested it might also be helpful in passing a bond if it met additional community needs. In this scenario, we would need written agreements with the school district that gave us reasonable and priority access.

A critical disadvantage for the school option is it does not provide for community meeting space which has been a concern for many. There may still be some access issues. Mary Ann mentioned that the school option may still qualify for some limited county funding but private donations outside of Murray would be minimal.

Mary Ann said this discussion hinges on whether the downtown redevelopment is a priority. If it is, then the performing arts facility should also be a priority. If it is not, then the school facility is important because we need additional space and we won't have this window of opportunity again.

Shauna asked what kind of commitment we need from the city council. This is what they asked Lynn Chatterton. Mary Ann said the city strategic plan must identify the downtown area and the facility as one of the top priorities. Secondly the city must actively lobby the county to get their commitment. Mary Ann suggested the city ask the county how serious they are about the county cultural facilities master plan. Shauna was concerned about that approach and felt one-on-one discussions would work better. Mary Ann said that the city did meet with Councilman Wilde and Snelgrove but they have indicated there is currently no money to implement the plan. Everyone agreed some kind of lobbying needs to take place because Salt Lake City is lobbying for a 2500 seat theater and Sandy City publicly endorsed that plan.

Scott asked if we have answered concerns raised by the county. Mary Ann said we have provided an operational plan. Murray City has stated it plans to run and operate the facility. Some of the county committee members would like the county to run it but the county council and the facility master plan has indicated they support a city's option to operate the facility. Scott noted that this is a fair question because the county does not want to help build a facility that will be shut down a few years later. Mary Ann noted that we are working

with two different groups - the county facility committee who seems to have a different view than the county council itself. Mary Ann noted that we have also gathered information from groups interested in using the facility and the foundation has completed the fundraising feasibility study. We have recently asked how to share this with the committee. The county committee is still working on criteria for a regional facility. Scott asked if the foundation had enough money to pay the consultant. Mary Ann said they were almost there and the consultant suggested that the foundation establish a board of trustees who has the expertise to raise money for paid staff who in turn will move the capital campaign forward.

Mary Ann asked the board how we should proceed with the two options. Shauna felt the city needs to focus on the downtown area and we should not give up on the best option.

The Board recommended the following:

- a. Support our primary goal of the regional performing arts center and encourage the city council to include it as a priority in the strategic plan.
 - b. Continue to lobby the county to make a commitment. Keep communication open and try to find an opportunity to share the feasibility study with them.
 - c. Educate the newly elected city councilmen about the performing arts center.
6. The float theme for Days of 47 parade is Pioneers...building on the dream. Some ideas included castles in the sky, Snow White and dwarfs building with the gems, building blocks, tinker toys. Board members liked using a sound system.
 7. In the future, Mary Ann will revise the grant application budget page to reflect the past year, current year, and the future proposed year so reserve funds carried over from year to year is not so confusing. We currently ask for the past year and the future year, but not the current year.

Grant Discussions and Recommendations included:

Murray Symphony - Recommended \$2500 (Requested \$5000)

They provide a free Christmas concert in addition to their other programming. Board members were concerned that public funds were the major revenue source and they did not use all of their grants (Murray City and ZAP) for 2010. They had a large reserve fund but Mary Ann explained non profits are allowed to have three years of cash reserve for down years or saving for a larger item in the near future. However, it appeared that their reserve funds were growing from the grants combined with their ticket revenue and donations. Some questioned why the proposed new budget showed increased marketing expenses but a decrease in ticket revenue. The Board felt they could operate with smaller public funding assistance. It was proposed to grant them the same amount as other similar groups.

Murray Concert Band -Recommended \$2500 (Requested \$2500)

Former and proposed budgets were in compliance with criteria. No board concerns. They provide a free concert as part of the Fun Days Sunrise Service in addition to their normal programming.

Ballet Center - Recommended \$2500 (Requested \$2500)

Former and proposed budgets were in compliance with criteria. There was some concern about a private business receiving grants. Shauna felt they are in it to make money. Mary Ann explained many private businesses have a 501 c 3 that separates expenses for public performances from their business. In the case of the ballet center, their studio “recitals” are separate from their major public performances. It was noted that they have applied for a performance contract rather than an operational grant which is allowed in our grant application. They provide a summer and winter performance as part of our series and 1-2 free matinees for school children. Mary Ann explained it would cost even more if they charged us a fee and we collected ticket sales. Shauna asked about the quality. Mary Ann and other board members agreed it was good quality and involved a lot of local children.

MHS Art Fest - Recommended \$1000 (Requested \$1000)

Former and proposed budgets were in compliance with criteria. Scott suggested the application include who the artists are and what they are doing to make sure they are providing quality art experiences for the festival. Mary Ann explained some vendors are different from the artists. Jenny encouraged the high school to invite the junior high and elementaries to participate on a regular basis.

Miss Murray Scholarships - Recommended \$4000 (Requested \$4500)

The past budget is in compliance with criteria but the future expenses/revenue do not cash match the grant. Mary Ann clarified that the Miss Murray Pageant hasn't been required to follow the same criteria in the past. The grant is more focused on the scholarship awards and the service the young women provide related to the float. Concerns were expressed about the Little Miss component. It was clarified that it is not a “pageant judging” and the winner is chosen from literary or visual art entries related to a different topic each year. Jenny suggested this receive a little more attention in selection criteria. Another concern was low participation which is typically 5 to 15 girls. Shauna ran the Days of 47 Pageant for several years. Their participation was much higher and their queen scholarship was much lower. Mary Ann noted we are in line with surrounding communities for both participation and scholarship amounts. Days of 47 draws from a statewide pool. Shauna wondered if pageants are a thing of the past and asked what benefits it provides for Murray. Mary Ann said it has been a tradition for the community and many support it. The queen is very involved in the community with her platform. The girls who participate grow from the experience. Mary Ann noted the Miss Murray spends many hours doing community service and rides on all the floats with the attendants. They spend a great deal of money on clothing for the Miss Utah Pageant - sometimes more than the scholarship amount. Jenny wondered if the pageant should focus more on contributions of the applicants and not so much on the beauty part. Even the talent component was weak. Shauna wondered if we could give a straight across 10% cut. Brandon noted that the grants have not increased for many years which is in affect a cut. Board members suggested we pay for the scholarship award for the queen and the top two attendants but not for other attendants and awards.